

REMARKS

This application pertains to a novel adhesive based on styrene block copolymers, which is highly stable to aging and which can be used to create a connection which can be parted again by extensive stretching in the direction of the bond plane, and its use for a pressure sensitive adhesive (PSA) sheet strip.

The novel adhesive is comprised of a block copolymer having one or two end blocks composed of vinylaromatics, and a block composed of a conjugated diene. In the conjugated diene, the fraction of 1,2-linked diene is selectively hydrogenated. It must be emphasized that it is the 1,2-linked diene within the conjugated blocks that are selective hydrogenated, and not entire individual conjugated diene blocks.

Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Lühmann et al (US 6,004,665). As the Examiner sees it, Lühmann teaches block copolymers which contain identical or different "D" blocks (formed by polymerization of 1,3 dienes), which can be selectively hydrogenated and the Concise Encyclopedia of Polymer Science and Engineering ("the Encyclopedia") teaches that the polymer microstructure of butadiene will form a variety of polymer structures, including the vinyl or 1,2 type butadiene. The Examiner therefore concludes that the Encyclopedia inherently renders Lühmann an anticipation of Applicants' independent claim, "since 1,2 butadiene must necessarily be present in at least some amount...".

The Lühmann reference mentions the selective hydrogenation of the D blocks. This is clearly understood to mean that some D blocks are hydrogenated, and some are not. Applicants' invention is different than that. In Applicants' invention, as defined by the

independent claim, it is the 1,2 linked diene that is selective hydrogenated. More specifically, as the Examiner recognizes from the Encyclopedia, individual D blocks may have several different forms of the butadiene polymer structure, such as the 1,2 linked structure and the 1,4-linked structures. According to the present invention, it is the 1,2-linked structures that are selectively hydrogenated, and not the entire block.

Applicants' claims recite "...wherein the fraction of 1,2-linked diene is selectively hydrogenated. This concept is neither taught nor in any way suggested by the Lühmann reference. The Lühmann reference cannot therefore properly be seen as anticipating Applicants' claims or rendering them obvious, and the rejection of claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Lühmann et al (US 6,004,665) should be withdrawn.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Luhmann et al. (US 6,004,665). The Examiner believes that SBBS block copolymers, although not expressly taught by Lühmann, are "well within the grasp of one of ordinary skill as an obvious selection for a block copolymer". This is, of course, sheer speculation, as the Examiner has not shown where SBBS block copolymers are mentioned at all, let alone their use in an adhesive for a pressure sensitive adhesive sheet strip which is residuelessly and nondestructively redetachable by extensive stretching substantially in the bond plane.

The rejection of claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Luhmann et al. (US 6,004,665) should accordingly now be withdrawn.

In view of the present remarks it is believed that claims 1-17 are now in

condition for allowance. Reconsideration of said claims by the Examiner is respectfully requested and the allowance thereof is courteously solicited.

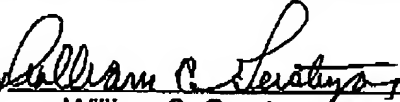
CONDITIONAL PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME

If any extension of time for this response is required, Applicant requests that this be considered a petition therefor. Please charge the required petition fee to Deposit Account No. 14-1263.

ADDITIONAL FEE

Please charge any insufficiency of fee or credit any excess to Deposit Account No. 14-1263.

Respectfully submitted,
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via facsimile no. 571-273-8300 addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on November 22, 2005


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